

The Contribution of Stereotypes on Inter Clan Conflicts among the Kuria Ethnic Group in Tanzania

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Abstract

This study aimed at exploring stereotypical traits among the Kuria ethnic group and how they contribute to inter clan conflicts among the clans of the Kuria ethnic group. The data to inform the study were collected from 235 respondents (Mean Age =36, SD =13) randomly and purposively selected from members of the selected clans and government officials using checklist, interview and focus group discussion. The findings indicated that all three target clans were described by both positive and negative traits though varied in degrees of percentages suggesting that these clan groups had similar characteristics. The findings also indicated that inter clan hostility, cruelty, and aggression were the major stereotypical traits contributing to inter clan conflicts. Further more the findings revealed that each clan had its own slogan that indicated its superiority over other clans and that were praised by clan members. This kind of thinking contributed immensely to frequent inter clan conflicts. The study concluded that Kuria clan members should rethink about the social, political and economic impacts of inter clan conflicts as these conflicts have tarnished their image to other Tanzanian.

Key Words: Kuria Clans, Stereotypes, Conflicts.

1. Introduction and Background

Stereotype is a Greek word composed of two words, stereo and typos. Stereo means rigid, solid and typos mean letters or characters (Sarjveladze, Shushania, Melikishvili & Baliashvili, 2009). Ethnic stereotypes are generalized judgements about beliefs, characteristics, attributes, expectations and behaviour about social groups and their members (Tylor, 2003; Feldman, 2005; Panner & Roy, 2008; Khan, Benda & Stagnaro, 2012). The judgement of the target group depends on the chosen comparison standards of the perceiver (Strack, 2004; Operarion & Fiske, 2001 in Dobewall, Strack, & Muller, 2011) or biases in assessment of two or more variables in the social and physical environment (Meiser & Hewstone, 2011). Within the realm of ethnic stereotypes these ideas can distinguish between auto-stereotypes and hetero-stereotypes. The auto-stereotypes are generalized ideas about in group and normally they are positive whereas hetero-stereotypes are generalized ideas about the out group which are normally negative (Sarjveladze *et al.* 2009). Stereotypes share the basic feature that is simplifying the world view as individuals are not in terms of their personal characteristics but are viewed in terms of attributes ascribed to an individual or all members of their particular group (Meiser & Hewstone, 2011). By so doing they imply disrespect and neglect of diversity (Sarjveladze *et al.* 2009). Common stereotypes involve age, occupation, gender, religion, and ethnic groups (Myers, 2005; Sarjveladze *et al.* 2009). For instance what impressions come in your mind when you hear or encounter a member of the Kuria ethnic group? Do those traits in your mind truly describe that person? Is your judgement realistic?

Sometimes people make judgements, or begin interacting with someone, with little to go on but their own stereotypes (Myers, 2005). Lock and Johnston (2001) observed that in many interaction people use stereotypes they have despite the personal information provided about that person. These judgements lead people to label others as lazy, smart, cruel, intelligent, hostile, and hardworking (Feldman, 2005). These are characteristics that sometimes make up the stereotypes positive, but they are frequently negative and they are the sources of prejudice and discrimination in many societies (Feldman, 1985; Lock & Johnston, 2001). Stereotypical thoughts are the cognitive part of prejudice while the hatred, admiration and anger make up the affective part and discrimination is the behavioural component of stereotype (Panner & Roy, 2008). Stereotypes have harmful consequences as they influence how much people like or dislike, affect social judgement, they distort our perception and divide people into groups by creating differences between in groups and out groups (Dobewall, Strack & Muller, 2011; Sarjveladze *et al.* 2009). However, Schaller and Neuberg (2008) commented that mere dividing people into groups is not sufficient to promote discrimination. There must be some cognitive association linking that out group and its members with some specific traits to promote behavioural avoidance. These cognitive associations will colour how people interpret events, bear prejudice

and discriminations steering to conflicts among persons and groups (Passer & Smith, 2004; Dunning & Sherman, 1997; in Myers, 2005).

Inter clan conflicts refer to the situation in which two or more clans which perceive and/or are perceived by others to have the same blood relation become in disagreement. Frequent inter conflicts among the Kira, Nchari and Renchoka clans are caused by complex interplay of factors namely cattle raiding, land tenure and boundary disputes, deteriorations of discipline among the youth, cultivation of marijuana and prejudice (Fleisher, 2000; Iddy, 2007 & Andrew, 2010). The damages caused by these conflicts are witnessed in all spheres of life including political, economic and social. These conflicts encumber development of persons as individuals to national level. For instance, within the social; sphere education system has witnessed a remarkable setback. Such as low school attendance, drop out and truancy because in some cases their schools are used as fighting ground (Iddy, 2007). The economy of conflicting clans is stagnant due to frequent threshing of farms, burning of crops and killing of productive people of the clan groups.

2. Theoretical Framework and Origin of the Kuria Inter Clan Stereotypes

In this study, stereotypes formation and development can be explained by two theories. These are social learning theory and the social identity theory. Social learning theory to stereotypes proposes that the behaviours of parents and peers shape feelings of children about members of various out groups (Feldman, 2005). Bandura (1997) in Passer and Smith (2004) propose that stereotypes are learned through reinforcements, and internalized through observation and other ways of learning from in the society. Contributing on how stereotypes are acquired Sarjveladze *et al.* (2009) argue that in the course of education and upbringing individuals are introduced to different templates which they use when forming ideas about people while acting and thinking. Sometimes individuals may accumulate their own learning history of group related information by encountering events pieces of information concerning social groups over time (Meiser & Hewstone, 2011). In Tarime, stereotypes are internalized and reinforced through observing the inter clan fights. For instance, children imitate inter clan fighting by planting banana trees and then shouting to them while saying they are killing their enemies; meaning members of the rival clan (Zacharia, 2008). This indicates that children understand inter clans' relations and how they should behave in inter clan contact. Considering stereotypes is learned in the society, Allport (1954) opined that transmission of stereotypes from parents to children is through teaching and learning, and not heredity. On the other hand, children aged as low as three years experience frequent inter clan fighting which overwhelms their schemas (Andrew, 2010). Such kind of environment prepares children to be more stereotyped and hostile. Social antipathy began early in life with the child's exposure to caste and class predilections of parents and other family members Camicia (2007) and Katz (1991). It is hard to imagine a person who does not know the major stereotypes in their society (Lock & Johnston, 2001). Bar-Tal & Teichman (2005) supports that stereotypes are a sociocultural product which play a determinative role in shaping inter group relationship.

Likewise social identity theory attempts to explain inter group bias, discrimination and conflict using the social identity construct. The theory asserts that; first, people categorise themselves. Second, they associate themselves, in certain groups called an "in group" and thirdly, they compare themselves with others seen as "out group" (Lock & Johnston, 2001). Social identity means that individuals seek certain group identities because those identities help them to achieve positive self-esteem and self worth. Consequently, individuals categorize themselves into in groups and out groups with the aim of establishing both positive and distinct positions for the in group. For Kuria, clan identity is the basis for identification. They refuse to be recognized as members of other (if not birth clan) clans even if they live in the same village under the same administrative authority (Iddy, 2007; Tobisson, 1986). The theory suggests that out group is attributed with false negative or exaggerated stereotypes and negative values, while the in group is associated with positive attributes. Finally inter group conflicts are one of the strongest factors making social identity accessible (Pennington, Gillen & Hill, 1999). Though some studies have been done to investigate the cause of inter clan conflicts in Tarime researcher is not aware of any study which has concentrated on the contribution of inter clan stereotypes on inter clan conflicts among the Kuria ethnic group in Tanzania.

3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the contribution of stereotypes on inter clan conflict, among the clans of the Kuria ethnic group in Tanzania.

4. Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study intended to:

- i.) Explore the stereotypes that members of the Kira, Nchari and Renchoka clans assigned to each other.
- ii.) Find out the contribution of stereotypical traits on inter clan conflicts among the Kira, Nchari and Renchoka clans.

5. Research Questions

With respect to the study objectives, the study was guided by two main research questions: what are the stereotypical traits that members of Kira, Nchari and Renchoka assigned to each other and which stereotypical traits contribute to inter clan conflicts among the Kuria ethnic group in Tanzania.

6. Methodology

6.1 Participants

Respondents of this study included 235 clans' members, traditional elders and government officials who were randomly and purposively sampled in the study area. The sampled respondents were 230 clan members including clans including clan elders. The sampled government officials were one District Administrative Secretary, one Division Executive Secretary (DAS), two Ward Executive Officers (WEO) and one Village Executive Officer (VEO). Members of the clan groups included 80 from the Kira clan, 80 from Nchari and 70 respondents were members from Renchoka clan. These respondents were selected from six purposively sampled villages namely Ng'ereng'ere and Remagwe for Kira clan, Nyamuhunda and Kubiterere for Renchoka clan and Korotambe and Kiongera for the Nchari clan. The villages were also purposively sampled from Silari, Mwema and Susuni wards. Among these respondents (60%) were males and (40%) were females whose age ranged from 18 to 66 years old ($M=36$, $SD = 13$). The majority of respondents (91.3%) had primary education while (8.7%) had secondary education.

6.2 The Instrument and Procedures

In exploring inter clan stereotypes and conflicts among the members of the selected clan; participants completed a stereotype checklist which consisted of 31 traits of which 13 were positive traits and 18 negative traits. The respondents were instructed to read the list of traits and then select traits which typically described each specified clan by putting a tick (✓) against the Kira, Nchari or Renchoka clans. By so doing it was easy to count number of times each clan scored in each trait and helped to understand how that clan is described (Best & Khan, 2006). The descriptions obtained from the checklist were consolidated by information from interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD).

These data collection methods helped the researcher to evaluate the sincerity and insight of the participants from different subgroups of that population (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Best & Khan, 2006). The checklist was initially prepared in English, and then translated into Kiswahili to ease responses from respondents whom majority could understand. Finally it was retranslated into English for data analysis and reporting. Numerical data obtained from the checklist were entered and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 to compute frequencies and percentages for each trait in relation to clan groups. In presentation and interpretation of data high percentage of respondents who assigned particular traits to a clan group was taken to mean that, the clan was best described by those traits. Textual data obtained from interview and FGD were organized, categorized and interpreted into related themes with some statements presented to represent respondent's voices.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Stereotypes Assigned to Target Clans

The first objective of the study sought to explore stereotypical traits that are assigned to the Kira, Nchari and Renchoka clans of the Kuria ethnic group. The results revealed that respondents assigned both positive and negative traits to describe members of all selected clans as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Stereotypical Traits Assigned to Kira, Nchari and Renchoka Clans.

Stereotype	Clan Name					
	Kira		Nchari		Renchoka	
	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%

Honest	58	25.2	68	29.6	48	20.9
Tolerant	58	25.2	74	32.2	53	23.0
Intelligent	121	52.6	45	19.6	24	10.4
Polite	59	25.7	70	30.4	66	28.7
Hard Working	80	34.8	53	23.0	34	14.8
Rich	183	79.6	18	7.8	6	2.6
Educated	161	70.0	20	8.7	9	3.9
Religious	55	23.9	58	25.2	44	19.1
Peace loving	65	28.3	62	27.0	52	22.6
Clean	74	32.2	51	22.2	26	11.3
Good leaders	70	30.6	56	24.5	41	17.9
Strong	125	54.3	31	13.5	28	12.1
Many	200	87.0	7	3.0	4	1.7
Coward	21	9.1	83	36.1	71	30.9
Lazy	13	5.7	96	41.7	76	32.9
Warlike	8	3.5	135	59.0	54	23.4
Fighters	30	13.0	103	44.8	64	27.7
Thieves	44	19.1	98	42.6	25	10.8
Hostile	10	4.3	129	56.1	57	24.7
Drunker	6	2.6	76	33.0	64	27.8
Aggressive	9	3.9	118	51.3	65	28.3
Ignorant	2	.9	122	53.3	78	34.1
Superstitious	5	2.2	118	51.3	62	27.8
Conservative	4	1.7	122	53.0	61	26.5
Traditional	5	2.2	120	52.2	47	20.4
Dishonest	4	1.7	136	59.1	61	26.5
Hypocrites	4	1.7	141	61.3	65	28.3
Cruel	10	4.3	122	53.0	63	27.4
Few	6	2.6	58	25.2	155	67.4
Poor	1	.4	42	18.3	164	71.3
Immigrants	3	1.3	32	13.9	177	76.6

7.2 Stereotypical Traits Assigned to the Kira Clan

The results from the checklist indicated that various traits were assigned to the Kira, Nchari and Renchoka clans. For instance majority of respondents (87%), described the Kira clan positively as many in population compared to other two clans, the clan was also described as rich (79.6%), and educated (70 %). On the other hand, (19.1%) described the Kira clan as thieves, (13.9%) fighters and (9.1%) as coward by of all respondents in the checklist. findings from interview and FGD respondents also indicated that comparatively the Kira were many, had more educated members and are rich compared to the Nchari and Renchoka. These traits denoted power and were the source of superiority among of the members Kira clan. Similar findings were obtained from Mwema Ward Executive Officer and DAS who revealed that each clan had a way of dealing with conflicts or a slogan that indicated they are better off than others.

For instance the Kira have a tendency to keep records of events, which provoke them and would inform the authority. In case those events continued, they rose up, organized themselves through the village council (litongo) and clan elders and then attacked their rivals. This behaviour corroborate with the argument by Sherif and Sherif (1956) that when members of a group correctly or incorrectly perceive threat, unfair treatment or invasion from another group, the opinion is crystallized, a slogan is formulated, and then the effective measures are organized which result in intense reactions within a reference scale of hostility.

7.3 Stereotypical Traits Assigned to the Nchari Clan

The findings from table 1 showed that majority of the participants' assigned negative traits than positive traits to members of the Nchari clan. The results indicated that majority of respondents' assigned negative traits to characterize Nchari clan. For instance, (61.3%) of respondents described the Nchari as hypocrites, (59.1%) respondents dishonest, and (59.0%) warlike. Using the positive traits members of the Nchari clan were assigned traits which included tolerant (32.2%), politeness (30.4%), and (29.6%) respondents described the Nchari as honest. The negative characterization of respondents was attributed to the existed hostility resulted from frequent inter clan conflicts with both Kira and Renchoka clans.

Doob (1952) observed that in various inter group relations stereotypical traits that are used to describe a particular group depend upon the attitude towards the group as well as towards the trait itself. Interestingly, the Nchari fights with both the Kira and Renchoka and the Luo ethnic group at a time was perceived as praise to them. This was evidenced during focus group discussion where participants from Nchari clan argued that they were real men who could fight with many clans and are not defeated. The Nchari people state that when they decide to fight they are like bees (Andrew, 2010).

7.4 Stereotypes Assigned to the Renchoka Clan.

The results from table 1 indicated that members of the Renchoka clan were described by (28.7%), of respondents as polite people, (23%) described them as tolerant and (22.6%) described them as peace loving. Apart from the positive traits above respondents also described the Renchoka clan negatively. Majority (76.6%) of respondents described them as immigrants, (71.3%) poor and (67.4%) described them as few. The findings indicated that majority of participants' perceived members of Renchoka clan as immigrants and poor people. Like other two clans the Renchoka clan also had a slogan that indicating they are better clan especially in fighting. During focus group discussion the Renchoka argued that despite the fact that they are few in number compared to other two clans they have real men and warriors, who are capable of withstanding fights from the Nchari clan (perceived warlike clan). Arguably, the Kira and Nchari alleged the Renchoka clans that they are helped by their fellow Renchoka from Kenya (Andrew, 2010; Iddy, 2007). This kind of thinking among the clan members might be initiating and/or accelerating inter clan conflicts because people do not regret for fighting rather they perceive it as honour to them. Apart from the above stereotypical traits that were assigned to describe Renchoka members in the checklist, during interview and FGD, respondents evoked other 18 traits that were not included in the checklist Table 2. Similarly, the findings indicated that members of the target clans had negative attitudes and hostility towards one another thus described one other negatively. The clans which had positive inter clan relationship also assigned positive traits to each other.

Table 2. Traits Mentioned in Interview and FGD to Describe the Target Clans

Kira	Nchari	Renchoka
Giant	Cultivators of marijuana	Friendly
Obedient	Confidants	Confidants
Love people	Quarrelsome	Obey traditional elders
Civilized	Like revenge	Like to lament
Tall	Isolated	Like revenge
Cultivators of marijuana	Bushmen	Cheaters
Confidants	Obey traditional elders	Arrogant
Arrogant	Arrogant	
Cheaters	Cheaters	
Obey traditional elders	Disobedient	

7.5 Traits Assigned to Specific Clan

When respondents were given opportunity to describe each other during FGDs and interview the results indicated that the Kira was distinctively assigned the traits that characterized clan members as rich, giant, tall and civilized. The Renchoka was the only clan assigned traits such as friendly, immigrant and people who like to lament. Members of the Nchari clan were described as Bushmen, isolated, and quarrelsome. The description of members during interview and FGD generally correlated with the way in which respondents assigned stereotypical traits to target clans in the checklist. The Kira and Renchoka clans were described positively while the Nchari clan was described

negatively. This inclination was attributed to inter clan relations were the Kira and Renchoka clans had positive relationship hence described each other positively and described the Nchari negatively.

7.6 Traits Generalized to Two Clans

Apart from each clans being described by specific traits during interview and FGDs some traits were mentioned to describe two clans except one of the selected clans. In this aspect the Renchoka was the only clan that was not ascribed traits such as cultivators of marijuana and thieves. The Kira was the only clan that was not assigned like to revenge and hypocrites' traits of they like to revenge and hypocrites. Furthermore, the Nchari was the only clan that was not assigned the trait related to politeness.

7.7 Stereotypes Assigned to all Clans

The findings indicated that respondents varied in frequencies and percentages of positive and negative traits assigned to clans. It was found that members of all target clans were described as confident, arrogant, hard working, aggressive, warlike, cheaters, and obedient to traditional elders. This proposes that the target clans might be having some similar characteristics but having traits that stereotypes traits function to represent inter clan realities, creating images and justify the inter group relationship among Kuria clans (Andrew, 2010; Alexander, Brewer & Herrmann, 1999).

7.8 Stereotypical Traits Contributing to Inter Clan Conflicts

In line with the second objective, this study revealed that some stereotypical traits which were ascribed to selected clans contributed immensely to inter clan beliefs, perception and behaviours steering to inter clan conflicts. The stereotypes causing inter clan conflicts included:

7.9 The Perceived inter Clan Superiority and Inferiority

The findings revealed that members of each clan perceived themselves as more superior and centre of everything (*ethnocentric tendency*). On the other hand, they perceived members of other clans (out group) as substandard. Because of stereotypical and prejudicial behaviours respondents used negative and undermining words to portray members of other clans. In indicating out group inferiority, respondents used words such as *Akarisya sing/ Ebhelisya pl* (uncircumcised man) and *aghasagane sing/ Ebhisaghane pl* (uncircumcised woman) when referring to members of an out group. In portraying the in group superiority respondents used words like *abhamula/abhasachasacha* (real men) to describe their clan. Circumcision is highly valued as a key stage in preparing warriors of the clan and as a sign of moving from childhood to adulthood (Andrew, 2010). Tobisson (1982) observed that Kuria members described out group who are not circumcised as children even if they were adults. In reality, those members are circumcised but they are called uncircumcised to undervalue them. Such kind of words promoted discrimination and attack of members of other clans and even killing them since they have no value. In support of this argument a Renchoka respondent from Kubiterere village complained that:

“...The source of inter clan conflicts is contempt. Some clan members perceive others as if are not human beings and are not supposed to live in this area that is why they can easily kill any member of the other clan...”

The complaint implies that inter clan conflicts between the Nchari and Renchoka are motivated by inter clan stereotypes. It was very interesting to find out that members of the Kira clan perceived themselves and by other clans as better off compared to their counterparts.

In addition, the study revealed that among the three clans, the Renchoka was a clan that was perceived as inferior by the Kira and Nchari clans. They were mostly described by the respondents poor by (71.3%) and as few in number by (67.4%) as of the respondents. This perception was attributed to their population and resources they possess as compared to their counterparts. This proposes that people have their own evaluative criteria that guide clan members to assign different characteristics to other clans. The judgements about the out group depend on the chosen comparison standards (Strack, 2004; Operarion & Fiske, 2001 in Dobewall, Strack & Muller, 2011). Allport (1954) argues that stereotypes are used by members of in group to rationalize their conducts in relation to members of the out group. They also led to inaccurate judgements and discriminatory behaviours (Khan, Benda & Stagnaro, 2012).

Furthermore, Simpson and Yinger (1953) reasoned that the group seen as superior or inferior is not superior or inferior in any absolute sense but only relative to the standards of the evaluating group. For instance among the Kuria ethnic group people are living in almost the same pockets and they are almost alike in social, political and economic status. McGarty, Yzerbyt and Spears (2002) assert that common environment provide similar stimulus experience to different people and therefore similar stimulus emerges. These criteria are used to nurture inter clan thoughts and relations, as members of each clan are treated with regard to the existing stereotype of their clan. On such reasons, in any misunderstanding between clans members who are perceived as inferior are easily attacked because the perpetrators think they could win the fight easily. In contrast, members of the attacked clan want to show the other clan that they are also superior having a self defending slogan and self-protective this ways as the results it promotes frequent inter clan conflicts among the target clans.

7.9 Perceived Immigrants and Indigenous

Among the Kurias, some members of the clans perceive themselves as Tanzanian and remark other clans as not Tanzanians. This tendency was evidenced among the Kira, Nchari, and Renchoka clans. It was found that respondents alleged the Renchoka clan as immigrants from Kenya, while the Kira and the Nchari perceived themselves as indigenous. This belief was more embedded among the Nchari than the Kira. This influenced inter clan conflicts between the Renchoka and Nchari clans. The results further showed that the Nchari members labelled that the Renchoka as Kenyans in that case they were supposed to go back to their motherland. Correspondingly, the Renchoka claimed that the Nchari are also Kenyans as there is a similar clan (Nchari) in Kisii, Kenya. Table 1 indicates that majority of respondents from all three clan ascribed immigrants traits to Renchoka clan.

Table 3. Respondents by Clan who assigned the Immigrant Trait to Renchoka

	Kira	Renchoka	Nchari
Kira	2	52	21
Renchoka	0	60	10
Nchari	1	65	1
Total	3	177	31

It indicated that even the Renchoka themselves have succumbed to this stereotype and implicitly perceive themselves as immigrants. Khan, Benda & Stagnaro, (2012) observed that sometimes members from minority (in this case few in terms of population) adopt the majority (in terms of population) group's characterization of their own group as well. Even if group members do not personally believe the stereotypes to be true, they suffer from *stereotypes threat* (an anxiety felt by group members that their behaviour or performance might be used as confirming evidence for existing negative stereotypes). Arguably this is the tendency that has motivated 60% of all respondents from Renchoka clan to describe themselves as immigrants as indicated in Table 3.

The stereotype that Renchoka clan members are immigrant was also clearly exposed in a FGD at Korotambe (Nchari) village where one participant was quoted saying that:

“...Renchoka clan that you hear, are all Kenyans, there is no even a single Tanzanian. Indigenous Renchoka in Tanzania are very few and we are intending to return them back Kenya where they belong...”

The immigrant stereotype was also noted during FGD from one participant of the Renchoka clan at Kubiterere village who said that:

“...We do not fight the Nchari for land or cattle theft, the only problem is that as members of the Nchari clan refer us as Kenyans and they want to evict us back to Nyamosense (one village in Kenya) where we belong ...”

The sentiments above indicate that the Nchari and Renchoka frequent inter clan fights are sometimes motivated by stereotypical belief that the Renchoka are not Tanzanians at the same time the Renchoka alleges the Nchari not to be

Tanzanians as well. Stereotypes create differentiation between in group and out group, dictate inter group relations and make people perceive and describe each other as more different than normally they are (Khan, Benda & Stagnaro, 2012 Operarion and Fiske 2001 in Dobewall, Strack and Muller, 2011).

These believe and attitudes promoted inter clan fighting as each clan perceive others not only the out group but also the group which need to be evicted from the area. Then they could be called conflicts of eviction ambition and resistance. The Nchari clan wanted to evict Renchoka clan not just because they are not Tanzanian but because they are economic competitors in terms of land and other resources. Stereotypes also created competition over resource as the *perceived weak* clans are easily attacked to snatch their land, cattle and others clan resources. In competitive interdependence, either the clans perceive each other as a threat as they increase in population lead to land shortage in the area.

7.10 Inter Clan Hostility and Cruelty

Hostility refers to aggressive feelings or behaviour towards someone or a particular group, while cruelty is a disposition to give unnecessary pain or suffering to others. The data obtained from checklist, interview and FGD indicated that all clans were assigned both traits, though they differed in percentages. Members from the Nchari clan were described as more hostile and cruel followed by the Renchoka and the Kira clan were described as less hostile and cruel compared to Nchari and Renchoka. The data collected during the interviews and FGDs counteract data from checklist where respondents from six sampled villages' described all clan members as hostile and cruel. These results could be reflections of the existing inter clan relations among the three clans as Nchari clan had frequent inter clan conflicts with both Kira and Renchoka (Iddy, 2007).

However, the data from FGD uncovered that members of Ngerengere, Kiongera and Nyamuhunda villages were more hostile and cruel than others. Findings revealed that members from six sampled villages: Nge'reng'ere village (Kira clan) were more hostile and cruel than their counterparts in Remagwe village. Similarly, the Nchari clan members from Kiongera village were more hostile and cruel than those in Korotambe. On the other hand Renchoka clan members in Nyamuhunda village were said to be more hostile and cruel than those at Kubiterere. These arguments and perceptions were attributed to villages which had more incidences of killing members of the out group. For instance respondents reported that conflicts between the Nchari and the Renchoka always start at Kubiterere village.

This village is inhabited by members of both Renchoka and Nchari clans, although they have been living in hostility and hatred for quite sometimes (Andrew, 2010; Iddy, 2007). During FGDs one member from Renchoka clan commented on this relationship and said that "...Kubiterere is a village inhabited by Nchari and Renchoka members, but the way we interact to each other, one might think they are people of two different countries..." This comment indicates that within Kuria clan members even if people will live in the same village, it is difficult to intermingle and overlook their clan differences. In support of this Bar-Tal & Teichman (2005) observed that the stereotypes which sometimes people hold are so ingrained that their effects on behaviour can be automatic and unconscious.

The hostility and cruelty differences between the inhabitants of some villages can be attributed to factors such as the perceived initiators of conflicts, as members of more hostile and cruel villages claimed that they were not initiators of conflicts but were forced to join inter clan fighting to defend themselves or help their fellows. The Second reason could be the traumatic experiences, where some villages have experienced more inter clans fighting, deaths, and destruction of properties. Such incidences might have promoted them to behave in a more hostile and cruel manner. These stereotypical behaviour might encourage inter clan conflicts because each clan read hostility and cruel behaviour from another. When members of different clans interact, they anticipate members of other clan to behave or act in ways that reflect their stereotypes, a phenomenon known as *Self fulfilling prophecy* (Feldman, 2005). However, when members of the out group behave inconsistently with in group expectations, the in group may explain the behaviour as due to special circumstances (Crocker & others in Myers, 2005). Such behaviour steers inter group relation to be adversely related as Kunda & Sherman- William, (1993), Sanbonmatsu & Others (1994) and Stangor & McMillan (1992) cited in Myers (2005) assert that stereotypes influence how people construe someone's behaviour. Consequently, members of each clan prepare to defend themselves or revenge on past events making inter clan conflicts persist.

The findings corroborate those of Smith and Dempsey (1983) who found that stereotypes are loaded with preference, covered with affection or dislike, attached to fear, desire, pride and hope. Whoever is involved with stereotypes, is judged with appropriate sentiments unless he/she keeps prejudice in suspense. In addition, the current findings are congruent with those reported by Ehrlich and Rinehart (1965) on the methodology of stereotypes research. Their findings showed that stereotypes of specific groups are well crystallized in the sense that there are high degrees of consensus in the assignment of particular traits to a particular group.

Similarly, the findings are similar to those of Snellman and Ekehammar (2005) which indicated that people's cultural superiority, ethnocentrism and stereotypes may lead to a ranking of the out group closer or further away from the in group depending on how socially desirable the out group is perceived by the in group.

7.11 Perceived out Group Aggressiveness

Inter clan relations among the Kuria ethnic group is highly influenced by perceived out group aggressiveness. Members of the out group are seen as more aggressive and behaving in a threatening manner and they are ready to attack and kill members of the in group. Therefore, in any inter clan interaction members from different clans perceive each other as threats and read intention to harm members from the out group. This increase attacks to each other even for minor issues which could be solved if members involved were not characterized with stereotypes.

8. Conclusion

It is high time for members from the Kuria ethnic group to rethink and see issues outside the box. As members of different clan originating from a common ancestor, all clans members need to think and judge the extent to which inter clan stereotyping and conflicts have affected them economically, socially and politically. The popular national outlook for members from Kuria ethnic group is negative in Tanzania. The stereotypes are down to normal social relationship where members from the Kuria ethnic group are sometimes avoided. This takes place because the stereotypes regarding the Kuria ethnic group are too much spread and generalized.

Effective strategies for stereotype reduction may be used to minimize inter clan stereotypes and increase clan members' familiarity and reduce tension. These strategies may include integrated education system, frequent inter clan contacts in various settings such as market areas, traditional dances, football matches, inter marriage and organized public discussion where clan members will have a forum to discuss the inter clan stereotypes and conflicts. These strategies may help members to re-evaluate existing stereotypes by so doing they will determine their impacts on thoughts and behaviours as well as damages and benefit they bring in their society.

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